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STATE FOR NEA/ARN, NEA/PA, NEA/AIA, INR/NESA, R/MR,  
I/GNEA, B/BXN, B/BRN, NEA/PPD, NEA/IPA FOR ALTERMAN  
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LONDON FOR GOLDRICH  
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON IRAQ

#### Summary

-- Lead story in all papers today, April 14, highlights King Abdullah's letter to Sa'd Khair, the director of the General Intelligence Department, expressing appreciation for and pride in the Jordanian security apparatus for the recent disruption of terrorist plans in Jordan. Another lead story highlights ongoing events in Iraq, including the hostage situation and the preparations of American forces to enter Najaf.

#### Editorial Commentary

-- "The bitter American harvest"

Columnist Mohammad Kawash writes on the back-page of independent, mass-appeal Arabic daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm (04/14): "What is happening now on Arab territories is the inevitable result of America's uncalculated and impetuous actions that were based on the logic of force and the use of the military without any consideration to the values, traditions and beliefs of Arab society in general and the Iraqi society in particular. The U.S. administration itself walked into the 'wasps nest' in Afghanistan, creating a storm that carried with it the Afghani situation to all the countries of this region.. As everyone expected, shrapnel from this bloody war and the violent confrontation are flying to Iraq's neighboring countries as a result of a series of American mistakes and the lack of American understanding for the issued affecting the Iraqi people. The cycle of violence is expanding in the region and safe and stable Arab countries are now faced with threats resulting from the spread of the phenomenon of extremism."

-- "The departure of the invaders from Iraq is an escape"

Daily columnist George Haddad writes on the op-ed page of center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (04/14): "With the passing of time and the accumulation of losses, Americans have begun to wonder about the point and the real objectives of the invasion, and whether this invasion and aggression was justified financially, humanely and morally. Now that the invaders have used up all the pretexts behind which they can take cover, they remembered the United Nations in the hope that it might lend a helping hand. Here, the American dilemma appears most evidently. The Americans have come to realize that, on one hand, they cannot contain the Iraqi Intifada, and, on another, they cannot stand still because that would mean more loss in lives and money. They also cannot declare the bankruptcy of their position and the defeat of their project. True, they can commit massacres and they can destroy cities, but that, as barbaric and viscous as it is, will not bring them any closer to victory. What to do then in these difficult times with the presidential elections in the horizon? There is no solution but for the Zionist Bush administration to leave Iraq and hand it over to the United Nations."

GNEHM